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UNIVERSITY ARCHIVES

PORTRAITS
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by

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in Partial Fulfillment
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Approved by

Walter Barker
Thesis Adviser

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APPROVAL PAGE

This thesis has been approved by the following committee of the
Faculty of the Graduate School at the University of North Carolina at
Greensboro.

Thesis Adviser Harvey Barker

Committee Members Harvey Barker

Gilbert C. C. C.

Andrew Martin

Paul Probst

May 9, 1974
Date of Acceptance by Committee

CATALOGUE

Bobbie Holton. oil, 16" x 18"
 Warsaw. oil, 18" x 20"
 Frank Holton. oil, 16" x 20"
 Randy Parks oil, 16" x 18"
 Cathy McDade oil, 14" x 14"

PORTRAITS

The subject of this thesis is the portrait. The portraits are painted objectively, derived directly from nature.

I chose several young persons and several older ones so that I could paint some different types. The people are sitting. The pose is about waist length or less, the head turned to the right or left - one a profile. And the expressions are relaxed ones. To isolate the person a few inches of space are left between the shoulders and the canvass edge. They wear simple garments, colored white or beige. The simplicity and absence of accessories enables me to concentrate on the head and the space that it occupies.

The people posed in my studio, which gave me a constant source of light and background color. Except for the painting of my father which was done at night under artificial light, all posed in natural light. I use light to illuminate the form rather than to build it.

Objectivity led me to study not only the surface appearance of the head but its anatomical structure as well. I purchased a life sized skull model and with the aid of an anatomy text laid on the muscles in clay over the plastic. I had read that Eakins did this in a class at the Philadelphia academy. A pre-med friend told me that in one of his classes at Wake Forest an anatomist laid clay muscles over a human skeleton.

Also I continued modeling the figure from life and completed several clay heads to strengthen my understanding of form.

The artists that influenced me the most are Eakins, Velasquez, and Durer. In Eakins' portraits, objectivity and intellect are qualities that I very much admire. I like the way he is able to make the form appear solid in space. The same applies to Velasquez, except that I did not want my people to inhabit such a dark space or atmosphere. Durer attracts me because of his intense observation of his sitters.

Nevertheless, with all of my interest in objectivity I still hope to convey a strong, organic image that contains some psychological import.

After stretching Belgian linen and sizing with rabbit skin glue, I apply two coats of white lead in oil, sanding lightly between each layer. Then a third toned coat composed of venetian red, ultramarine, and white lead is applied. This traditional procedure is chemically sound, and the layers are relatively thin, flexible, and of low oil absorption rates. My palette is composed of vermillion, Naples yellow, burnt umber, black and flake white.

I begin by painting directly but deliberately blocking in with thin colors the tonal relationships. Gradually, through a combination of glazes and impasto, I work out the details of the image until I am satisfied with its coherency. The resulting surface is relatively smooth. In the image itself, the brush stroke is sometimes visible but not as a bravura gesture.